

Fortine Ranger District
Fortine, MT 59918

no attachment
found

March 22, 1982

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Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

The Fortine Ranger District is involved in improving/developing the snowmobile use of the Grave Creek/Wigwam Trail. This winter the District has installed and monitored a snowmobile trail counter as well as marked the trail from mile post eight to post twenty-five, or approximately seventeen miles.

The counter has recorded a greater number of snowmobile uses than had been expected for the early portion of the season. (See Attachment #1). This increased use could be attributed to the grooming of the trail by your state Recreation Department in February for the Flathead Snowmobile Club. However, for the past two weeks, use of the trail has fallen off partly due to the mummy condition of the trail and/or the peak snowmobile use of the area has been typically in April.

In the near future, either within this fiscal year or the next, the District is going to develop a trail hear turn around and parking area with appropriate signing. (See attachment #2), off the Grave Creek Road near mile post eight. In the following Fiscal year, we will improve on the site by adding a pit toilet with several picnic tables. We feel that by providing these additional items, the current as well as other snowmobile users will enjoy their experience even more. Lincoln County Highway Department has plowed Grave Creek Road up to the proposed turn around and parking area. There is no reason to believe they will not continue this public service activity.

To further assist and attract additional users from the Flathead, Libby, and Eureka areas. The Fortine District Ranger would like to request three groomings of the trail. Possibly one in the early winter, then spaced throughout the season. In the past, the end of snowmobiling for this area is around June 1, when the roads and snowfields open up.

Although the District does not have recorded data for the entire season, we have projected the use for the year after talking with local individuals involved in snowmobile use. We will be happy to respond to any questions concerning this matter. Please contact Ron Williams or Eric Heyn for additional information.

for Frank R. Williams
JOHN W. PRITCHARD